Connotation and Denotation: How does Word Choice affect a Paragraph?

For each numbered set below, write the individual word under the column which best describes its connotation.

1. Mansion, shack, abode, dwelling, residence, house, home, dump
2. Spinster, old maid, unmarried woman, maiden lady, career woman
3. Snooty, arrogant, vain, self-satisfied, proud, conceited, egotistical
4. Titter, giggle, chuckle, laugh, guffaw, roar, snicker, snigger, cackle
5. Plump, obese, fat, pudgy, burly, roly-poly, bulky, weighty
6. Tight, frugal, economical, thrifty, penny-pinching, saving
7. Clever, sly, cunning, shrewd, calculating, skillful, smooth
8. Sullen, withdrawn, silent, taciturn, glum, reticent
9. Concise, brief, economical, pointed, terse, compressed
10. Steal, burglarize, help oneself, appropriate, embezzle, purloin, filch, “borrow”

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Positives | Negatives | Neutral |
| 1 |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |
| 6 |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |

How does Word Choice Create a Different Mood?

Directions: Change the following underlined words to words that have the same denotation, but a different connotation to create a different mood in the paragraph. Make sure your new mood stays consistent throughout the paragraph. You may need to change other words to fit the context of the new mood. Write your paragraph below the one that needs to be corrected.

Emily entered the empty room. As she glanced at the curtains, their red color held her eye for a moment. At first, she failed to notice the chair between the two windows, but as she looked down, she was surprised to find a coin in the center of the plush cushion. The silver shined from the dark blue velvet. Before she picked it up, she looked around in hesitation. Was somebody watching? She wasn’t sure. So, it should not have been a surprise to her when, as she reached for the coin, she heard a loud thud behind her.

Write your *new* paragraph below…

What mood are you trying to create? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_